

**Amendment to the Claims:**

The following listing of claims replaces all previous versions and listings of claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A handle assembly for a surgical instrument, the handle assembly comprising:

a trigger member, the trigger member movable in a proximal and distal direction;

a safety button, wherein the trigger member is not movable until the safety button is depressed;

a first side and a second side relative to and distinct from the proximal and distal axis direction, the safety button slidable from the first side to the second side and from the second side to the first side.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Previously Presented) The handle assembly of claim 1 wherein the safety button includes a pin having an engageable end and extending through either side of the handle assembly.

4. (Original) The handle assembly of claim 3 wherein the safety button includes a first pin extending through the first side and a second pin extending through the second side.

5. (Original) The handle assembly of claim 3 further comprising a spring surrounding the pin.

6. (Original) The handle assembly of claim 3 wherein the safety button includes at least two ribs, a gap separating each pair of adjacent ribs.

7. (Original) The handle assembly of claim 6 wherein the safety button includes a first side rib, a second side rib, and a middle rib, a first side gap located between the first side rib and the middle rib, and a second side gap located between the second side rib and the middle rib.

8. (Original) The handle assembly of claim 6 wherein the trigger member includes a safety button engaging member, wherein, if the engageable end of the pin of the safety button is not depressed, then the safety button engaging member of the trigger will abut a rib when an attempt is made to move the trigger, and further wherein, if the engageable end of the pin of the

safety button is depressed, then the safety button engaging member of the trigger will slide between a pair of adjacent ribs.

9. (Original) The handle assembly of claim 8 wherein the safety button engaging member is hook shaped.

10. (Original) The handle assembly of claim 4 wherein the safety button includes a first side rib adjacent the first pin, a second side rib adjacent the second pin, and a middle rib, a first side gap located between the first side rib and the middle rib, and a second side gap located between the second side rib and the middle rib.

11. (Original) The handle assembly of claim 10 further comprising a first spring surrounding the first pin and a second spring surrounding the second pin.

12. (Original) The handle assembly of claim 11 wherein the first side and the second side each include an opening for passing the first pin and the second pin, respectively, each opening including a pocket for seating the first spring and the second spring, each pocket having a greater diameter than a diameter of each opening.

13. (Previously Presented) The handle assembly of claim 1 wherein the trigger includes a spring receiving member, the handle assembly further comprising a trigger spring connected between the spring receiving member of the trigger and a protrusion within either the first side or the second side.

14. (Previously Presented) The handle assembly of claim 1 further comprising an adjustment screw positioned between the first side and the second side, the adjustment screw for adjusting length of a rod extending from a distal end of the handle assembly.

15. (Original) The handle assembly of claim 14 wherein the adjustment screw is only adjustable prior to securing the first side to the second side.